## **Grain/Bread questions**

1. Do we know when the new bread and grain chart will be published?

Currently, USDA has not provided the official grain/bread information that would include assistance with meeting the whole-grain rich requirements. At a training for state staff the beginning of March , USDA staff indicated that in spring of 2012 the existing Grains/Bread instruction will be updated to "Grains" and reflect the ounce equivalents and Whole Grain-Rich Food Requirements. Our Bureau will provide that information as soon as it is available.

- 2. How will desserts count towards the grain requirement? Are desserts limited?
- 3. When you say 2 grain based desserts per week what does that mean?

A grain based dessert would provide a grain serving or a partial serving, such as cookies, cake, etc. Schools can plan only two of those items per week.

- Due to grain-based desserts contribution toward intake of solid fats and added sugars,
   USDA has reduced the number of allowable grain-based desserts at lunch to a maximum of 2 per week.
- 4. We serve bread and butter sandwiches daily and peanut butter sandwiches on two days per week. Will we be able to continue this or not? How do I add this into my calorie, grain maximums?

Each slice of bread counts toward the maximum amount of grain you can offer, and half of the grain servings must be whole-grain rich. It will not work in most meal planning to set out 'all you can eat' bread servings and remain within the range of servings. Peanut butter will count toward meat/meat alternate servings, and also provides saturated fat to your menu planning, so should be limited in use. In order to document the number of servings and the calories, you will need to know how many servings are planned for each grade group.

## Vegetables, fruits and salad bar questions

5. Do you have any idea how a blended vegetable will count or when you will get those guidelines?

We do not have more definite information to share with regard to blended vegetables and how to count them. For example, in a country blend of carrots, peas and corn, the carrots would count toward a red/orange serving, and the peas and corn toward a starchy vegetable. If the mix is an even 30% of each item and you can find that information in the manufacturer's data, or you make your own mix with frozen vegetables, you can determine how many servings you have that count toward each subgroup, in the same way as analyzing other components in a mixed component recipe. We have not heard that more information is forthcoming, but if and when it is shared with us, we will share it with all participants.

6. So do you offer as much fruits and vegetables at no extra charge if you open up the salad bar to everyone?

The way that you allow or make food available to students in a salad or food bar is up to each school district. Salad or food bar servings must be tracked just as other component servings are tracked, and the number and size of servings to each of the grade groups must be documented. If you place one #10 can of applesauce on the food bar, and you put a ½ cup scooper in the food bar tray that holds the applesauce, you are planning that there are 25 or so ½ cup servings made available. You must document how those 25 servings are split between different grade groups, if more than one grade group can access the food bar. And each student tray must be monitored at the end of the food bar, if that is the end of the serving area, to ensure that each student has a minimum fruit or vegetable serving on their tray.

In many schools, the food or salad bar is already 'open to everyone'. Offering 'as much fruits and veg etablesat no extra charge' is a choice each school district would make. There are minimum servings that are required but no maximum.

7. In a 9-12 setting, does the minimum of 1 cup affect the 1/2 on the tray to make it reimbursable or do you just have to offer a cup each day?

You are required to plan a 1 cup serving and have a 1 cup serving available to the first and the last student in the serving line. As in the past, an offer versus serve arrangement and planning means that you plan reasonable numbers of servings according to the past usage. In the new rules with offer versus serve, a student can be allowed to take ½ cup instead of the full cup, but they must know that they can take a full cup as well. And the vegetable subgroup being planned for must be available in a full serving, to the last student in line.

- 8. In offer vs serve if they decline the fruit or vegetable can you claim the meal? No
- 9. You talk a lot about vegetables for breakfast. Can we serve 100% fruit juice for breakfast?

Yes, 100% fruit juice is still allowed at breakfast. Serving vegetables to substitute for fruit is the new part of meeting the component requirement. When the breakfast serving size increases, only ½ of the component can be made up of 100% fruit juice.

10. Trays already have trouble holding half cup serving. How will more fit?

We don't really have an answer for you with this. Talking to your vendors who supply trays will be one strategy, and possibly using the larger compartments to hold the fruit or vegetable serving would be an option on some days. Pre-portioning some items might also help.

11. If you have a salad bar and have someone monitoring that , do they have to take the fruit or the vegetable that is on the menu or may they take others that are on the salad /fruit bar and still count as a reimbursable meal?

The salad/fruit bar is part of your menu. You will identify at the start of the line those items, and all fruit and vegetables -- either hot on the hot serving line or cold on the salad/fruit bar -- are choices for the student according to the way the meal is planned. It does not matter where in the serving area (which includes the salad/fruit bar) the student chooses the fruit or vegetable items.

If the salad bar is a separate line, it must offer all components of a reimbursable meal including the weekly requirements for vegetable subgroups. The requirement is for schools to make the subgroups available in every line. The child is not required to take any specific subgroups under OVS. In the March training, USDA stated that operators do not necessarily have to change their offerings each day on the salad bar.

#### 12. Is there guidance for salad bars?

The 'fruits and vegetables galore' manual is still a good resource for planning salad/food bars. There are a lot of suggestions for including a variety of items available. As far as specific guidance on meeting regulations with the use of salad/food bars, a memo was issued titled 'Salad Bars in the National School Lunch Program, SP-02-2010, revised in 1-2011. You can find that memo here: <a href="http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2011/SP02-2011revised\_os.pdf">http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2011/SP02-2011revised\_os.pdf</a>. As you can note by the date of the memo, this superseded the new regulation issuance, but still provides relevant information on using salad bars in meals.

13. Can whole fruit such as apple, orange, banana be counted as 1 cup of fruit?

You must use the current Food Buying Guide size information to determine if a whole fruit counts for one cup measure. There is no set rule on 'one whole' equaling 'one cup'.

# Meat/Meat alternate questions

14. Are we allowed to offer larger portions on the meat/meat alternate as we do now?

There can and will need to be different size servings to meet the required minimum and maximum meat/meat alternate ounce-equivalents for different age groups. You must plan to stay within the meat/meat alternate servings allowed per week for the grade group you are planning for. This might mean offering different serving sizes each day, but when you add up the ounces for the week, they must not exceed the maximum. If the question is meant to ask whether ala carte sales of additional servings are allowed, that is still allowed.

#### 15. Is there a handout of meat alternatives?

For information on what is creditable as a meat/meat alternate, please use the current Food Buying Guide. The information in the beginning of the chapter and the items identified as

creditable will be used until the Food Buying Guide is updated, with the addition of tofu and soy yogurt.

- 16. We serve 7 days a week. How many additional servings of meat are we allowed to plan? What about a 4 day week?
  - When a school week operates on a shorter or longer cycle (i.e. 4-day week, or 6- and 7-day weeks), menu planners should plan to increase or decrease weekly requirements by 20% for each day that deviates from the 5 day standard week.
    - Further, weeks with 1 or 2 days may be combined with either the previous or following week to determine weekly requirements.
  - Daily requirements are unaffected by a longer or shorter week.
- 17. So we do not have to serve 1.5 oz meat for k-3 and 2oz. for 4-8 anymore.

Correct. There are no K-3 or 4-8 grade groupings either. For grade group K-5, and for grade group 6-8 a minimum of 1 ounce must be planned each day.

18. My hamburger patties are 3.3 oz now that is too big, right?

First of all, if they are 3.3 oz, are they CN labeled to provide a certain serving? That is the number that you will use to determine how many servings you must count the patty toward. And if you provide a 3.3 oz serving on one day of the week, you will need to adjust other days to stay within the maximum of the week. You would also want to consider what 3.3 oz of hamburger will provide toward saturated fat in the week.

19. If the CN label says it provides 2oz equiv. but the patty is 2.5 oz does it meet the requirement or is it too much?

The CN label information is the information that counts. You would have 2 ounces of meat/meat alternate in your planned meal if you use this patty. You must determine whether you want to serve 2 ounces in this day according to what you have planned for the rest of the week to know if it is acceptable to you.

20. The Jr. High and Sr. High will be eating in a mixed group next year. How would I plan on the right serving size of meat/meat alternate?

For the 6-8 grades, the weekly servings range is 8-10. For the 9-12 grades, the weekly servings range is 10-12. If you consistently plan 10 servings per week, each group will stay within the range required for them.

#### Seconds, a la carte questions

21. If students want to purchase extra entrees, is that going to be okay, as that would put them over the maximum for the week if they ate every day. How do we monitor that?

Does a la carte remain the same? Do these calories and component counts for a la carte as well?

Will double lunches at the high school be stopped?

Extra cash sales, also known as a la carte, are not regulated with the calorie or number of servings of any component requirements. If you allow students to purchase extra entrees or sides, they must meet the rules of Iowa's Healthy Kids Act. You will not need to monitor the nutrients in ala carte sales under the new meal pattern regulations. The extra cash sales are not entered into the nutrient analysis work.

- 22. If our students get seconds, how will that affect our calorie totals? With RCCI's, since our boys do not pay for lunches, do seconds count against the calories, fat, serving amounts and such? If we give them seconds aren't we over our calories and what about obesity?
  - If your students get second helpings as part of that first meal payment or ticket punch, the extra servings are added into the total number of servings available and will count toward the weekly maximums allowed. For example, if you are planning for 100 students and you make 130 servings of a hamburger on a bun and after all students are served, the extras are given away 'free', they do count toward the total number available in the week. So each student received in this example, 1.3 servings. This planning for free extras definitely will affect meeting the nutrient ranges.
- 23. Can students who receive free/reduced lunch purchase extra entrees or is the entree given to them at a cost to the hot lunch program?

Regardless of whether a student pays full price, gets the meal free or pays a reduced price, the first meal of 5 components is the single unit meal that is regulated with nutrient and portion requirements. Any extra foods that could be available to a student should not be given freely, since there is a food cost involved. The 'hot lunch program' is not designed to give away food. It is encouraged that free students would be charged for a second entrée, just like a student who pays full price would be.

# **USDA** foods (commodities) questions

24. We receive no commodity allotments for breakfast. Do you foresee any changes in this?

The USDA foods program regulations have not changed, and are based on average lunch meals only. No changes in the method of allotment is anticipated. There are USDA foods that are appropriate to serve at breakfast and this is allowed.

25. I know some of the USDA commodities we receive currently reflect these changes, I assume all commodities we receive will reflect these changes in school year 2012-2013? Has the government discussed changing their commodities to fit these requirements?

USDA food purchases and the 'food pipeline' can't always respond to changes as quickly as 6 months. Many of the foods offered do reflect lower sodium, lower sugar, lower fat and more choices in whole grain items, and it is up to the individual school district to choose items from the order form to meet their needs. You must always use your best judgment on ordering items because it is how you use the foods in your menu planning that counts. There won't be a standard of 'all commodities reflecting the new regulations'.

#### **Calories questions**

26. Is the amount of calories listed on the slide daily ranges? Are calorie ranges for daily?

Yes, the calories listed are daily ranges. Over a week's time, you will want meals to fall within this daily range in order to fall within the minimum and maximum. The calories in any one meal could exceed the standard as long as the average number of calories for the week meets the standard.

27. If you are short of calories, what can you add to make that up, or you will run out of components across the weekly total?

You will never run out of the weekly total of fruits and vegetables, because there is no maximum number of servings to offer. You will need to stay within the other component maximum number of servings. If you think you could be short on calories, you might choose an item that meets the serving size needs but offers more calories. For example, 2 ounces of chicken or 2 ounces of cheddar cheese both provide a 2 ounce serving of meat/meat alternate for the week, but they have different calories and other nutrients. It will be important to consider how you use the servings available in each component category.

28. Will there be guidance to get your menu to minimum of 750 calories while maintaining the maximum grains and meat /meat alternate?

Following the meal pattern and choosing a variety of foods should provide the calories needed over the week of planning in each grade grouping. By reading food nutrition facts labels and knowing some basic facts about certain types of foods would also be helpful. For instance, a tablespoon of margarine is about 100 calories, and so is a medium apple.

29. Is flavored milk not to be sold any more because it is too high in sugar?

Flavored milk is still allowed, but it must be skim.

30. At our school some of the kids buy extra milks. Will that also count into the calories for the day?

No, extra cash sales of any food item, including milk, do not count into the number of servings or the nutrients for the day. These are considered a la carte sales.

31. We have a lot of homemade recipes without the calories listed, is this a no no now?

Even prior to the new regulations, you were required to know how that homemade recipe counted toward meeting the components. Whether a recipe is homemade or a recipe from somewhere else, it is required to know certain things about the recipe. You would be encouraged to find a recipe that is analyzed to substitute for your homemade recipe. Most recipes that schools think are unique to their school are actually USDA recipes that were only slightly modified. The USDA recipes can be found at <a href="http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDivision.aspx?qs=cElEPTI3MA">http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDivision.aspx?qs=cElEPTI3MA</a>

#### **lowa Gold Star recipes and menus questions**

32. Will all the IA Gold Star menus/recipes comply with the new guidelines?

The lowa Gold Star menus and recipes were developed before the release of the new regulations, and plans are made to review them. When they have been revised, schools will be notified. Even though the recipes may not identify certain serving sizes of vegetable subgroups or sizes of grain/bread servings, they are excellent recipes to use. There were questions on the webinar related to recipes for school-made whole grain-rich products. These recipes were from the Kansas Department of Education . Go to <a href="http://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP">http://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP</a> Menus/SNP Resources Healthier Kansas Menus.htm

### Miscellaneous questions

33. How do we ensure that we are eligible for the additional six cents in October?

At this point, the specific certification documentation has not been announced. Planning meals that meet the new meal patterns and identifying the serving sizes of your food items, keeping the food production records and menus that have always been required for documentation will certainly be steps in the right direction. The meal planning tool announced during this webinar can be a good tool to help with the documentation, and it would be suggested to complete this each week and keep on file.

34. Is the DE/state keeping in touch with nutrition programs that we use to help calculate the sodium, fats and other nutrients to be sure we are in compliance?

The state of Iowa does not regulate the nutrient analysis programs that are available for school districts to purchase. USDA requires that software companies include the USDA nutrient database in order to be allowed for use by schools. These companies are nationwide, and as commercial vendors, are probably aware of the new regulations that school districts must follow. Each year, a list of nutrient analysis software companies that are in compliance with the USDA database is made available to those interested. It is posted at the national SNA website. If you currently use any approved software to analyze your meals, your company representative should be contacting you with program updates.

35. Are there any new requirements for Early Childhood Programs and Pre-K?

The only requirement announced so far is the milk requirement. Because these reauthorization regulations cover all Child Nutrition programs, new rules for younger students and children will be forthcoming. The timeline has not been announced. For now, schools may use the current meal patterns for pre-school children.

36. Are desserts limited?

Choosing to serve a food as a dessert will mean that the meal planner has decided that there is room for additional calories in the day or week planning, and the item chosen to be a dessert will fit into the other restrictions on grain/bread or meat items per week.

37. Will we be getting a new food buying guide?

Each chapter of the Food Buying Guide will be updated and released as it is finished. The Bureau will be sure to notify schools as the information is available.

38. Are you going to be providing new production sheet forms?

The food production records are being updated and will be posted at the Bureau website. They will be discussed during the regional trainings to be held in late March, April and May in various locations around the state. Please pay attention to emails you receive about this training event and plan to attend.

39. In a detention center in which the youth are 7th -12th grade is it ok to serve all on a 9-12 grade menu?

Also, we have boys from 5th grade through 12th. We currently use the 9-12 serving guidelines. Is this no longer acceptable and do we need to go to using the different serving groups such as k-5, 6-8 and 9-12?

You will need to determine where any overlap occurs and serve accordingly if possible. If there is no overlap, you will need to serve the participants according to their requirements. You will no longer be able to serve a larger serving size to all students as was possible in the past. If this requirement changes in any way due to the special circumstances present in an RCCI, we will let you know.

40. Are all schools required to serve Breakfast? Even if you are a private school?

Private schools have never been required to serve breakfast, and this has not changed. Currently, public schools are also not required to serve breakfast, although they were in the past. If you do serve a reimbursed breakfast, you will need to follow these new regulations.

41. I have a new Celiac student I offer a salad bar or a hot meal everyday in an offer vs serve school. What are the requirements to provide gluten free to these students?

These new regulations do not change the special dietary needs regulations that were previously in place. Please see the resources posted about special dietary needs at the Bureau website. Meals provided to students who require special diets are not analyzed with the rest of the school meals.

42. Is this new meal pattern going to fill up our big football player?

The new meal pattern and nutrients are intended to provide a certain amount of a day's requirement of calories, fat, vitamins and minerals for the average student. Probably the old meal pattern also did not provide enough calories for the most active students either. The major difference between the old pattern and the new one is that you will not be allowed to provide extra 'free' servings of grain/bread or other components to meet those extra calorie needs.

43. Do they have an estimated food cost per day meal with the new requirements?

The final rules indicated that USDA has estimated increases in food and labor costs that are equivalent to approximately 10 cents for each reimbursable school lunch and approximately 27 cents for each reimbursable breakfast in FY 2015 when all provisions have been implemented.

44. Do the new regulations include the summer food service program for this summer and how will this affect our production reports?

The Summer Food Service Program meal patterns and regulations are not affected by the new meal pattern and nutrient requirements for the National School Lunch Program. If there are new regulations written for the Summer Food Service Program, we will be sure to notify all schools. You will need to follow the current requirements about maintaining food production records.

45. How will condiments fit into the new guidelines?

Condiments will be analyzed and will count toward the calories, fat and other nutrient levels that are allowed in the week. Proper use of condiments and portion control will be important in menu planning, and documenting the number of servings according to grade group will be required.